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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNEP](#) [KISL](#) [SA](#)
SUBJECT: DRAFT SAUDI STATEMENT ON INTERFAITH
DIALOGUE

REF: A) RIYADH 1346
B) RIYADH 1395
C) VATICAN 0067
D) VATICAN 0077
E) VATICAN 0079
F) USUN 0519

Classified By: Classified by IO/PDAS James Warlick for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (U) This is an action request. See paragraphs 2 and 4.

12. (SBU) The Saudi Mission to the UN has shared with us the draft text of a statement it hopes to see issued following the upcoming UNGA plenary session on interfaith dialogue. A copy of the Saudi text is at paragraph 3. USUN should engage with the Saudi Mission to obtain the line-in, line-out changes at paragraph 4, and should seek support from the Saudi Mission and the UN Secretariat for SYG Ban Ki-moon to issue the revised text. A copy of the resulting text sought by the USG is included at paragraph 5.

13. (SBU) Draft text as provided by Saudi Mission (with paragraph letter indicators added for ease of reference):

(a) At the initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia, the General Assembly convened a high-level meeting during its sixty-third session on 12 and 13 November 2008 under item 45 culture of peace.

(b) The meeting reaffirmed the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The meeting further recalled that all States have pledged themselves under the Charter to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

(c) The High-level meeting underlined the importance of promoting dialogue, understanding, and tolerance among human beings, as well as respect for all their diverse religious, cultural and linguistic identities. Participating States expressed concern about the increase in serious instances of intolerance, discrimination, hatred expressions, derision of religious symbols, and the misuse of religions in actions of terrorism, violence and coercion, in direct contradiction of the commitment of all religions to peace, fraternity and love.

(d) The high level Meeting of the General Assembly reiterated its call for the dissemination of a culture of tolerance and mutual understanding through dialogue as a framework for international relations, and for supporting the initiatives of member states to deepen inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue.

(e) The High-level meeting welcomed the holding of the

world conference on dialogue held in Madrid between 16 and 18 July 2008 under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud, and King Juan Carlos I of Spain. The High-level meeting recognized that this initiative is the latest in a series of initiatives made by Member States at the United Nations which seek to entrench the culture of peace and understanding among the proponents of various faiths, cultures, and civilizations; and spread among all peoples the values of compassion, love, and fraternity, as well as the recognition of the common destiny of mankind

(f) The meeting endorsed the process initiated in Madrid, and strongly encouraged its continuation. It appreciated what the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud mentioned in his address regarding the establishment of a steering committee composed of representatives of all the religions and faiths represented in Madrid to continue the dialogue, and the allocation of a trust fund to guarantee the autonomy of the dialogue process so it continues free from any political interference.

(g) Member states expressed their commitment to strengthening and supporting existing mechanisms within the United Nations for protecting the environment, spreading education, eradicating poverty, and fighting drug abuse, crime and terrorism, utilizing the positive contribution of religions, faiths and moral humanitarian principles in these endeavors.

End Text.

14. (C) USUN should seek the following changes to the Saudi text. Should the Saudi Mission decline to accept some or all of these changes, USUN should seek further instructions from the Department.

-- Para a, sentence 1, and in all other instances throughout the document: Change "high-level meeting" to "plenary meeting."

-- Para a, sentence 1: "Culture of Peace" should be capitalized.

-- Para b, sentence 1: After "...in the Charter of the United Nations" add "and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." (Note: The Saudi Mission has indicated that it may prefer citing this as "and in basic Human Rights charters" or "and in basic Human Rights principles." USUN should press for explicit mention of the UDHR. End Note.)

-- Para b, sentence 2: Change "... universal respect for and observance of human rights..." to "respect for human rights."

-- Para c, sentence 1: Change: "religious, cultural and linguistic identities" to "religions, cultures and languages."

-- Para c, sentence 2: After "... hatred expressions," add "and harassment of minority religious communities of all faiths, as well as..."

-- Para c, sentence 2: After "... derision of religious symbols," add "restrictions on the freedoms of religion and expression,..." (Note: Should the Saudi Mission object to the direct juxtaposition of the point on derision of religious symbols with the point on religious freedom, the recommended added clause may be inserted after the phrase "and the misuse of religions in actions of terrorism, violence and coercion,..." End Note.)

-- Para c, sentence 2: After the phrase "and the misuse of religions in actions of terrorism, violence and coercion,..." add "and rejected the use of religion to justify the killing of innocent people,..."

-- Para d, sentence 1: Change "its call..." to "the call..."

-- Para d, sentence 1: Delete "as a framework for international relations,..."

-- Para d, sentence 1: Change "initiatives of member states..." to "initiatives of religious leaders, civil society and member states..."

-- Para e, sentence 1: Change "welcomed..." to "took note of..."

-- Para e, sentence 1: Delete "the holding of..."

-- Para e, sentence 2: Change "initiatives made by Member States..." to "initiatives made by religious leaders, civil society and member states..."

-- Para e, sentence 2: Delete "at the United Nations..."

-- Para e, sentence 2: Change "which seek to entrench..." to "to seek to entrench..."

-- Para e, sentence 2: Change "all peoples..." to "all people..." after which add "a culture of respect for human rights and tolerance,..."

-- Para e, sentence 2: Change "destiny of mankind" to "humanity of us all."

-- Para f, sentence 1: Change "The meeting endorsed..." to "Participants at the meeting acknowledged..."

-- Para f, sentence 1: At the end of the sentence, add "... through appropriate interfaith dialogue."

-- Para f, sentence 2: Change "It appreciated..." to "They took note of..."

-- Para f, sentence 2: Change "the establishment" to "his establishment"

-- Para f, sentence 2: Change "the allocation" to "his allocation"

-- Para g, sentence 1: Change "strengthening and supporting..." to "strengthen and support..."

-- Para g, sentence 1: After "drug abuse, crime and terrorism,..." add "combating intolerance, and protecting and promoting human rights,..."

15. (SBU) Revised text as sought by the USG:

(a) At the initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia, the General Assembly convened a plenary meeting during its sixty-third session on 12 and 13 November 2008 under item 45, Culture of Peace.

(b) The meeting reaffirmed the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The meeting further recalled that all States have pledged themselves under the Charter to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

(c) The plenary meeting underlined the importance of promoting dialogue, understanding, and tolerance among human beings, as well as respect for all their diverse religions, cultures and languages. Participating states expressed concern about the increase in serious instances of intolerance, discrimination, hatred expressions, and

harassment of minority religious communities of all faiths; as well as derision of religious symbols, restrictions on the freedoms of religion and expression, and the misuse of religions in actions of terrorism, violence and coercion; and rejected the use of religion to justify the killing of innocent people, in direct contradiction of the commitment of all religions to peace, fraternity and love.

(d) The plenary meeting reiterated the call for the dissemination of a culture of tolerance and mutual understanding through dialogue, and for supporting the initiatives of religious leaders, civil society, and member states to deepen inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue.

(e) The plenary meeting took note of the world conference on dialogue held in Madrid between 16 and 18 July 2008 under the patronage of King Abdullah and King Juan Carlos I of Spain. The plenary meeting recognized that this initiative is the latest in a series of initiatives made by religious leaders, civil society, and member states to seek to entrench the culture of peace and understanding among the proponents of various faiths, cultures, and civilizations; and spread among all people' a culture of respect for human rights and tolerance, the values of compassion, love, and fraternity, as well as the recognition of the common humanity of us all.

(f) Participants at the meeting acknowledged the process initiated in Madrid, and encouraged its continuation through appropriate interfaith dialogue. They took note of what King Abdullah mentioned in his address regarding his establishment of a steering committee composed of representatives of all the religions and faiths represented in Madrid to continue the dialogue, and his allocation of a trust fund to guarantee the autonomy of the dialogue process so it continues free from any political interference.

(g) Member states expressed their commitment to strengthen and support existing mechanisms within the United Nations for protecting the environment, spreading education, eradicating poverty, fighting drug abuse, crime and terrorism, combating intolerance, and protecting and promoting human rights, utilizing the positive contribution of religions, faiths and moral humanitarian principles in these endeavors.

End Text.
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